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ERS is the main source of research and analysis from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, providing timely information on economic and policy issues related to agriculture, food, the environment, and rural America.

Rural Chinese Households are Purchasing More Food

www.ers.usda.gov/publications/ERR8

Rural households in China have traditionally consumed food mostly grown on their own farms. While they continue to rely on self-produced grains, vegetables, meats, and eggs for a large portion of their diet, rural households are now purchasing more of their food as they enter the mainstream of the Chinese economy.



Cash purchases of food by rural Chinese households increased 7.4 percent per year from 1994 to 2003, according to *Commercialization of Food Consumption in Rural China*. Consumption has shifted from self-produced to purchased food at a rate faster than can be explained by income growth or changes in other household characteristics. The move away from self-produced food is associated with lower consumption of staple grains, the most important self-produced food in rural Chinese diets. Food consumed away from home is one of the fastest growing categories of rural household expenditures, doubling in budget share from 1995 to 2001. Commercialization of food consumption is diversifying Chinese diets, broadening food markets, and creating new opportunities for retailers and product distributors.

New Data on the Web

China Agricultural and Economic Data

www.ers.usda.gov/data/china

The ERS China Agricultural and Economic Database is a collection of agricultural-related data from official statistical publications of the People's Republic of China. There are 250 data items available at the national level, and 45 crop, livestock, agricultural output, and population items available at the provincial level. Data are annual. Years available vary from item to item. Many national data series are from 1949 to the latest year, but some items are available only for selected years. Users should be aware that data collection methods in China have changed over time.

National level data

Choose from 250 series, including crop and livestock production, input use, macroeconomic data, industrial output, price indexes, and food consumption.

Provincial level data

Choose from 45 series, including crop and livestock production, agricultural output, cropland, and population.

Commodity Markets and Trade

ERS Outlook reports provide timely analysis of major commodity markets and trade, including special reports on hot topics. All reports, along with a calendar of future releases, are available at: www.ers.usda.gov/publications/outlook

Assessing Recreation and Tourism Strategy in Rural Areas

www.ers.usda.gov/publications/ERR7

The promotion of recreation and tourism has been both praised and criticized as a rural development strategy. In *Recreation, Tourism, and Rural Well-Being*, the authors use regression analysis to assess the effect of recreation and tourism development on socioeconomic conditions in rural recreation counties. The findings imply that recreation and tourism development contributes to rural well-being, increasing local employment, wage levels, and income, reducing poverty, and improving education and health services. But recreation and tourism development is not without drawbacks, including higher housing costs. Local effects also vary significantly, depending on the type of recreation area.



Market-Led Growth vs. Government-Facilitated Growth: Development of the U.S. and EU Organic Agricultural Sectors

www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/WRS0505

Organic farmland and sales are rapidly growing worldwide, and the two largest markets are in the European Union (EU) and the United States. The two regions have adopted different policy approaches to organic agriculture. Many EU countries have "green payments" available for transitioning and continuing organic farmers, as well as a variety of other supply and demand policies aimed at promoting growth of the organic sector. The U.S. Government, in contrast, has largely taken a free-market approach to the organic sector, and policy is aimed at facilitating market development.

Growth Prospects for India's Cotton and Textile Industries

www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/cws/jun05/cws05d01

India's prospects are changing now that the Multifiber Arrangement (MFA) no longer governs world textile trade. Decades of industrial policies that were both inward-oriented and biased toward small-scale production continue to influence India's textile trade prospects. While the recent introduction of genetically-modified (Bt) cotton has revitalized prospects for cotton production, quality issues are likely to hamper Indian cotton sales until the structure of India's cotton marketing system changes significantly.

Illinois Ranks Third in U.S. Agricultural Exports

www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/fau/july05/fau10201

U.S. agricultural exports reached a record \$62.2 billion in fiscal 2004, boosted in part by a declining U.S. dollar. Illinois moved ahead of Texas to rank third among U.S. agricultural exporting States after California and Iowa, as fiscal 2004 U.S. agricultural exports continued to expand. Arkansas also replaced Indiana in the top 10 States in 2004. Illinois ranked first in soybean exports; California continued to dominate exports of vegetables and preparations, fruits and preparations, and tree nuts.

Disease-Related Trade Restrictions Shaped Animal Product Markets in 2004 and Stamp Imprints on 2005 Forecasts

www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/LDP/Aug05/ldpm13301

Disease outbreaks and related trade restrictions that affected U.S. animal-product markets and exports in 2003 continued to constrain markets in 2004. U.S. cattle and beef markets were most affected. Bans on key U.S. beef export markets were implemented and adjusted; court cases in the United States related to reopening the U.S. border to Canadian cattle and beef imports are moving forward.

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